

Mid-East Prophecy Update – March 18th, 2012

- For today's prophecy update I would like to draw your attention to a familiar passage of scripture found in Matthew's gospel chapter twenty-four.

Matthew 24:3-8 NIV (3) As Jesus was sitting on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to him privately. "Tell us," they said, "when will this happen, and what will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age?" (4) Jesus answered: "Watch out that no one deceives you. (5) For many will come in my name, claiming, 'I am the Christ,' and will deceive many. (6) You will hear of wars and rumors of wars, but see to it that you are not alarmed. Such things must happen, but the end is still to come. (7) Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be famines and earthquakes in various places. (8) All these are the beginning of birth pains."

- Please know, the passage we just read has been the source of much debate amongst many specifically as it relates to earthquakes increasing.
- It's because of this prophecy from Jesus Himself that the question is often asked, especially as of late, have earthquakes really been increasing.

The U.S.G.S. website asks then seeks to answer this question in an article they titled; "Are Earthquakes Really on the Increase?" Here's what they had to say; "We continue to be asked by many people throughout the world if earthquakes are on the increase. Although it may seem that we are having more earthquakes, earthquakes of magnitude 7.0 or greater have remained fairly constant."

http://earthquake.usgs.gov/learn/topics/increase_in_earthquakes.php

One website refuted this claim by saying "The USGS' answer to the apparent worldwide increase in the frequency of earthquakes, is that there are simply more seismograph monitoring stations now, and so *more earthquakes can be detected*. This sounds plausible to me for a moment, if I don't think through it any further, or actually look at the data. But, if more seismographic monitoring stations throughout the world detect more earthquakes, then shouldn't they detect more earthquakes in all magnitude categories without partiality towards any particular category?"

Longrange.com, another website had a similar article titled; 'IS EARTHQUAKE AND VOLCANIC ACTIVITY INCREASING?' In it they said; "According to some seismologists, "seismic activity is intensifying." They add, "the rate of occurring earthquakes has increased and the emission of energy has grown." On average, since 1900, there is one quake with a magnitude of 8.0 or higher each year. (In 2007, there were 4.) There are approximately 17 quakes between a 7.0 and a 7.9 per year. <http://www.longrangeweather.com/ArticleArchives/EarthquakeActivity.htm>

- I'm of the belief that one could move for a summary judgment in the sense that the material facts of the case do not warrant a full-blown trial.
- What I mean by that is, I believe what Jesus says over what the U.S.G.S. says any day. Furthermore, everything else Jesus says is happening.
- Wars and rumors of wars, nation rising against nation, kingdom against kingdom, and famines all are also increasing in frequency and intensity.

- Before we get into our study of Romans 8, there's one final matter I wish to address concerning devastating earthquakes and natural disasters.
- I think it's incumbent upon me to answer the nagging question of why God allows such suffering, or why God sends such catastrophic events.
- First, to the question of why God allows such catastrophe, let me simply say that sometimes that's what it takes to wake and shake people up.

Romans 13:11 NIV And do this, understanding the present time. The hour has come for you to wake up from your slumber, because our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed.

John 14:29 NIV I have told you now before it happens, so that when it does happen you will believe.

Luke 21:28 NIV When these things begin to take place, stand up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near."

- Secondly, to the question of why God allows bad things to happen to good people, and if God is a god of love, why does He allow us to suffer.
- In the interest of time, I'll quickly re-ask four questions, then, provide a Biblical and Berean answer for you to search the scriptures for yourself.

- Question #1: Why is there suffering in the first place? Because of sin, and God had to allow sin to its end, or He wouldn't be love or loved.
- If God would have just immediately eliminated Lucifer and a third of the angels, then all of His created beings would be forced to fear Him.
- Also, just as sin entered heaven vis-a-vis Lucifer, so too did sin enter earth vis-a-vis Adam without whom we wouldn't have the second Adam.

- Question #2: Why does God allow believers to suffer so much? This particular question is wrong, thus you cannot have a right answer for it.
- I would suggest that the question should be; "what does God want to do by allowing believers to suffer so much?" It's not "why" it's "what."

1 Peter 4:12-13 NIV Dear friends, do not be surprised at the painful trial you are suffering, as though something strange were happening to you. (13) But rejoice that you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed.

- Question #3: Why does God allow bad things to happen to good people? Again, the question is not right, and cannot have a right answer.
- Rather, it should be asked; "why does God allow good things to happen to bad people." because none of us are good, only Jesus Christ was.
- For lack of a better way of saying it, this is a "game changer" in the sense that it changes the whole complexion of understanding suffering.

Romans 3:10-12 NIV As it is written: "There is no one righteous, not even one; (11) there is no one who understands, no one who seeks God. (12) All have turned away, they have together become worthless; there is no one who does good, not even one."

- Question #4: If God is in control, why doesn't He stop bad things from happening? The short answer to this is, because God is sovereign.
- Another way to say it, and see it, is that while God hates tragedy and suffering, He may choose not to stop it simply because He alone is God.
- Knowing that this may sound both brutal and blunt, God is god, and we are not, and God does not owe us an explanation for our suffering.

"It is in such a book of Job that many suffering souls will find consolation and sustaining, and this because no attempt is made to explain the why of suffering, ...The problem in connection with suffering arises from the fact that there is seemingly no explanation of it. ...There are things in our heavenly Father's dealings with us which have no immediate explanation. There are inexplicable providences which test us to the limit and prove that rationalism is a mere mental pose.

Oswald Chambers, "Baffled to Fight Better," pp. 14, 17